

*Oral Questions***MEDICAL CARE**

STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH PROVINCES

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. On November 9 last, as reported at page 20545 of *Hansard*, in responding to a question from the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill on the subject of the proposed Canada Health Act, the Minister said that she had refused to make, and I quote, "any statements to the press on a health insurance issue since negotiations are now taking place".

Will the Minister say if negotiations are still taking place at the ministerial level, or indeed at any level and, if so, precisely who is currently involved in these active negotiations and what progress is being made?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Yes, Madam Speaker, I must apologize, but negotiations are still going on between ministers and officials.

[English]

PREPARATION OF DRAFT LEGISLATION

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Madam Speaker, I trust that the state of the Minister's voice is not indicative of any slipping of our health care system. I trust that she will seek urgent consultation with the medical profession on her own personal problems.

As part of her recent negotiations, the Minister allowed all of 12 minutes for a meeting with representatives of the provincial health ministers on November 1 last after which the chairman of that group reported by telegram to his nine colleagues that, and I quote, "she advised that it was her intention to seek approval of the federal Cabinet to prepare draft legislation". May I ask the Minister whether she can confirm that she is not going to have further negotiations prior to draft legislation being prepared, and why, in view of the importance she places on health care, she has not convened a national health conference comparable to the pension conference where representatives of the Provinces, the professional groups and the consumers could be heard?

● (1450)

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Because everybody wants action, not talk.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

COVERAGE OF EVENTS IN LEBANON

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Communications. Bearing in mind the very difficult situation which took place in

the City of Beirut, Lebanon, this past summer, and recognizing that that situation had the potential to change the map and the history of that area, and indeed of the world, for some long time, why was it that, night after night, we listened to feeds from NBC in the United States and had hardly any coverage from CBC from that area? And why was CBC so short-staffed in that region?

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, obviously, the mandate of the CBC is to give Canadians as wide a range of programming as possible in all fields, including news and public affairs. The CBC tries to run its operations efficiently and for reasons of economy, or for other reasons, which I would be very pleased to check out with the management of the CBC on behalf of the Hon. Member, it undoubtedly found it more efficient and more economical to take feeds from other networks.

COVERAGE OF EVENTS IN MEXICO AND AUSTRALIA

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Bearing in mind what the Minister has just said, Madam Speaker, I would now like to ask him, if efficiency was the cause for having so few people in a city like Beirut where history could be changed, why was it in the month just preceding, at Cancun, Mexico, when Global TV had one reporter and CTV had four, that CBC was there with 41, and just after the situation in Lebanon, in Brisbane, Australia, where Global took their feed from CBC, CTV had one reporter and CBC was there with 91. Why is it that everyone from CBC who raises his hand gets to go when the place is luxurious, opulent and plush, but we do not send people to the places where there is real news which could affect the history of the world, taking place? Could you justify that in the name of efficiency?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member does a great deal of injustice to the CBC correspondents, many of whom in the past had their lives endangered in various circumstances. The Hon. Member cannot have it both ways. He is trying to win on both sides of the question this afternoon by blaming the CBC for not being in one place, then blaming the CBC for being in another place. He also compares apples with oranges, Madam Speaker, when he speaks of networks such as Global or CTV, for he is indeed talking about one network—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fox: The Hon. Members on the other side do not want to hear me out, but it so happens that CBC runs more than one network. It runs two radio networks in two official languages in this country, and two television networks in two official languages in this country. And it runs a CBC international service, and a Northern service. If CBC wants to give coverage over all of these networks at the same time, it obviously takes